

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method of aggregating opinions, said method comprising:
2 consolidating a plurality of expressed opinions on various dimensions of topics as
3 discrete probability distributions; and
4 generating an aggregate opinion as a single point probability distribution by
5 minimizing a sum of weighted divergences between a plurality of said discrete probability
6 distributions.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said divergences comprise Kullback-Liebler distance
2 divergences.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said expressed opinions comprise opinions on
2 sentiments of products and services.
- 1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein said aggregate opinion predicts success of said
2 products and services.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said expressed opinions are generated by experts.

1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein said experts are arranged in a hierarchy of
2 knowledge, wherein said knowledge comprises said various dimensions of topics for which
3 opinions may be expressed upon.

1 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising presenting said aggregate opinion as a
2 Bayesian network.

1 8. A method of pooling opinions, said method comprising:
2 representing a plurality of expressed opinions received from a plurality of sources on
3 various dimensions of topics as discrete probability distributions;
4 creating a single point probability distribution by minimizing a sum of weighted
5 divergences between a plurality of said discrete probability distributions; and
6 generating an aggregate opinion based on said single point probability distribution.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said divergences comprise Kullback-Liebler distance
2 divergences.

1 10. The method of claim 8, wherein said expressed opinions comprise opinions on
2 sentiments of products and services.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein said aggregate opinion predicts success of said
2 products and services.

1 12. The method of claim 8, wherein said expressed opinions are generated by experts.

1 13. The method of claim 12, wherein said experts are arranged in a hierarchy of
2 knowledge, wherein said knowledge comprises said various dimensions of topics for which
3 opinions may be expressed upon.

1 14. The method of claim 8, further comprising presenting said aggregate opinion as a
2 Bayesian network.

1 15. A system for aggregating opinions comprising:
2 a network operable for consolidating a plurality of expressed opinions on various
3 dimensions of topics as discrete probability distributions; and
4 a processor operable for generating an aggregate opinion as a single point probability
5 distribution by minimizing a sum of weighted divergences between a plurality of said
6 discrete probability distributions.

1 16. The system of claim 15, wherein said divergences comprise Kullback-Liebler
2 distance divergences.

1 17. The system of claim 15, wherein said expressed opinions comprise opinions on
2 sentiments of products and services.

1 18. The system of claim 17, wherein said aggregate opinion predicts success of said
2 products and services.

1 19. The system of claim 15, wherein said expressed opinions are generated by experts.

1 20. The system of claim 19, wherein said experts are arranged in a hierarchy of
2 knowledge, wherein said knowledge comprises said various dimensions of topics for which
3 opinions may be expressed upon.

1 21. The system of claim 1, wherein said processor presents said aggregate opinion as a
2 Bayesian network.

1 22. A system for aggregating opinions comprising:
2 means for consolidating a plurality of expressed opinions on various dimensions of
3 topics as discrete probability distributions; and
4 means for generating an aggregate opinion as a single point probability distribution
5 by minimizing a sum of weighted divergences between a plurality of said discrete probability
6 distributions.

1 23. A program storage device readable by computer, tangibly embodying a program of
2 instructions executable by said computer to perform a method of aggregating opinions, said

3 method comprising:
4 consolidating a plurality of expressed opinions on various dimensions of topics as
5 discrete probability distributions; and
6 generating an aggregate opinion as a single point probability distribution by
7 minimizing a sum of weighted divergences between a plurality of said discrete probability
8 distributions.

1 24. The program storage device of claim 23, wherein said divergences comprise
2 Kullback-Liebler distance divergences.

1 25. The program storage device of claim 23, wherein said expressed opinions comprise
2 opinions on sentiments of products and services.

1 26. The program storage device of claim 25, wherein said aggregate opinion predicts
2 success of said products and services.

1 27. The program storage device of claim 23, wherein said expressed opinions are
2 generated by experts.

1 28. The program storage device of claim 27, wherein said experts are arranged in a
2 hierarchy of knowledge, wherein said knowledge comprises said various dimensions of
3 topics for which opinions may be expressed upon.

1 29. The program storage device of claim 23, wherein said method further comprises
2 presenting said aggregate opinion as a Bayesian network.

3